



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **ICE AND NAVAL MILITARY POLICE ARREST 5 ILLEGAL WORKERS** ***-Homeland Security & Naval Military Police team up to protect nation's critical infrastructure-***

NEW ORLEANS, La.—Five illegal aliens attempting to access the front gate of the Naval Support Activity here were arrested Friday for using fraudulent documents and making false statements to gain employment, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Special Agent-in-Charge Michael A. Holt and United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Louisiana Jim Letten announced today.

Four nationals of Mexico were employed by Havana Nights, a sheetrock finishing and painting specialist company. The remaining man, a Honduran, was employed by Rooftech. All men were scheduled to work on base housing units that were damaged following Hurricane Katrina. Three of the workers presented counterfeit Texas identification cards, one presented a counterfeit Social Security Card and one presented a forged document. These arrests are part of an ongoing joint ICE and U.S. Naval investigation being conducted at area Naval facilities.

Critical infrastructure such as airports, shipyards, defense installations and bio-agriculture industries are a primary law enforcement priority of ICE.

An increasing number of illegal workers have been identified as having access to or have attempted to access the Naval Support Activity Center or Belle Chase Naval Air Station. Fourteen individuals have been previously arrested and presented for prosecution in the Eastern District of Louisiana on charges that include using fraudulent documents to gain employment, falsely claiming United States citizenship, or illegal re-entry to the United States after deportation. Of the remaining illegal workers, investigative efforts have resulted in such workers no longer having access to the facility.

"This was an important law enforcement action based upon a strategic plan," said Holt. "Protecting the integrity of our nation's critical infrastructure in Louisiana is a crucial part of ICE's continuing enforcement strategy. When individuals use fraudulent documents to get jobs, they hide their true identity and history. We need to know who is working on our critical infrastructure sites."

"Because national security is our absolute number-one priority, it's imperative that we operate seamlessly and in partnership to use all the resources at our disposal and to make absolutely sure that the industries that provide for our defense and commerce are not vulnerable to, or threatened by individuals who operate under fraudulent identities," said Letten.

Under federal law, employers who knowingly hire or refer unauthorized workers face criminal prosecution and substantial fines.

To aid employers with the screening process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services operates the Basic Pilot Program, a Web-based system that businesses can use to verify the employment eligibility of newly hired workers. Nationwide, there are more than 15,000 employer sites linked into the Basic Pilot Program. Interested employers may call 1-888-464-4218 to obtain more information about the program.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities*